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FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1037
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RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1494
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UNCLAS COTONOU 000311

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/E JKNIGHT, AF/W ACOOK, VHARPER
LONDON FOR PETER LORD
PARIS FOR BKANEDA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BN](#)
SUBJECT: BENIN: REACTION TO OBAMA-MEDVEDEV SUMMIT

REF: STATE 71326

11. The Charge delivered the demarche requested reftel to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jean-Marie Ehouzou on July 14th. Ehouzou was very animated and positive discussing the success of Obama's trip to Moscow. He noted that it was obvious that President Obama was a man of peace and Medvedev looked at ease with him. Ehouzou went on to say that the path to peace was in place and would be difficult to undo now.

12. Ehouzou also remarked on President Obama's July 11 visit to Accra Ghana and praised Obama for visiting a country that was a prime example of democracy. He hoped in the future that Benin would also be rewarded with a visit to "crown the efforts" of the GOB.

13. Ehouzou praised the US for treating small countries as well as we treat big countries. After recent postings at the UN, he was critical of countries that tied aid to votes and was glad the US did not bully poor countries in that way. He criticized the US embargo of Cuba while saying that Cuba should be condemned for human rights abuses. He felt reasoned delegates would vote, as he did, with Cuba on lifting the embargo, but against them on human rights issues.

14. Ehouzou praised the OAS for supporting the ousted president of Honduras and wished that the AU would be as strong in the face of coups d'etat.

15. Ehouzou also addressed the New Embassy Compound, which should have a cleared, paid for and designated site soon. He complimented several other USG NEC's he had seen while traveling and hoped to see a beautiful modern building in Cotonou's administrative district soon. The Charge thanked him for his support in the matter and cautioned that a finished building was still a few years away.

BOUSTANI